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AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please add or amend the claims to read as follows, and cancel without prejudice or disclaimer to resubmission in a divisional or continuation application claims indicated as cancelled:

1. (Withdrawn) A method of culturing a Clostridium difficile, said method comprising growing said Clostridium difficile in a medium that is substantially free of animal-derived products.
2. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1, wherein said medium comprises a compound derived from a vegetable.
3. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 2, wherein said vegetable is a soybean.
4. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 2, wherein said compound is hydrolyzed soy.
5. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1, wherein said medium further comprises an iron source.
6. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1, wherein said culturing is carried out under anaerobic conditions.
7. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1, wherein said Clostridium difficile is being grown as a seed culture.
8. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 7, wherein said seed culture started by inoculation from a stock culture that was grown in medium that was substantially free of animal-derived products.

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9. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1, wherein said Clostridium difficile is being grown as a fermentation culture.

10. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 9, wherein said fermentation culture was inoculated from a seed culture that was grown in medium that was substantially free of animal-derived products.

11. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 10, wherein said seed culture was a second seed culture.

12. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 9, further comprising isolating Clostridium difficile Toxins from said medium.

13. (Withdrawn) A method of obtaining Clostridium difficile toxins, said method comprising the steps of: culturing Clostridium difficile in a first medium under conditions that facilitate growth of Clostridium difficile, wherein said first medium is substantially free of animal-derived products; inoculating a second medium with all or a portion of said first medium after said culturing, wherein said second medium is substantially free of animal-derived products; culturing said inoculated second medium under conditions that facilitate growth of Clostridium difficile and toxin production; and isolating Clostridium difficile toxins from said second medium.

14. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 13, wherein said first and second media comprise a compound derived from a vegetable.

15. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 14, wherein said vegetable is a soybean.

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16. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 14, wherein said compound is hydrolyzed soy.

17. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 13, wherein the step of culturing said Clostridium difficile in said first media or the step of culturing said inoculated second medium is carried out under anaerobic conditions.

18. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 13, wherein step the culturing said Clostridium difficile in said first medium was started by inoculation of said first medium with a previous Clostridium difficile culture that was cultured in medium that was substantially free of animal-derived products.

19. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 18, wherein said previous culture was a stock culture.

20. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 18, wherein said previous culture was a previous seed culture that was obtained by inoculation from a stock culture that was prepared by culture in medium that was substantially free of animal-derived products.

21. (Currently Amended) A composition comprising a culture medium, said culture medium being that is substantially free of animal products and comprising a yeast extract, said composition further comprising Clostridium difficile.

22. (Currently Amended) The composition of claim 21, wherein said medium further comprises[[ing]] a compound derived from a vegetable.

23-24. Canceled.

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25. (Previously Presented) The composition of claim 21, further comprising an iron source.

26. (New) The composition of claim 22, wherein said compound is a vegetable peptone.

27. (New) A composition comprising a culture medium, said culture medium being free of animal products and comprising a soy product, said composition further comprising Clostridium difficile.

28. (New) The composition of claim 27, wherein said soy product is a hydrolyzed soy product.

29. (New) The composition of claim 27, wherein said soy product is a soy peptone.

30. (New) The composition of claim 27, further comprising an iron source.

31. (New) A composition comprising a culture medium, said culture medium being free of animal products and comprising sodium thioglycolate, said composition further comprising Clostridium difficile.

32. (New) The composition of claim 31, wherein said medium further comprises a vegetable product.

33. (New) The composition of claim 31, wherein said vegetable product is a vegetable peptone.

34. (New) The composition of claim 31, further comprising an iron source.